

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims by canceling claims 2, 3 and 42, amending claims 1, 14, 25, and 36, and adding new claim 47, all without prejudice, as indicated on the following listing of all the claims in the present application after this Amendment:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for performing a finite element simulation, the method comprising automatically switching between an implicit method and an explicit method one two or more times during the finite element simulation.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising beginning the finite element simulation using the implicit method.
5. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising beginning the finite element simulation using the explicit method.
6. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the implicit method.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the explicit method.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising monitoring a number of iterations performed using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the number of iterations exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising monitoring the internal energy of the model during iterations of the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the internal energy exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising monitoring a length of time the explicit method has been running and automatically switching from the explicit method back to the implicit method if the length of time exceeds a predetermined threshold time period.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising extending the termination time of the finite element simulation thereby forcing the finite element simulation to end using the implicit method.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the formation of a metal shape.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the springback of a metal shape.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium storing one or more computer programs for performing a finite element simulation, the computer programs comprising instructions for automatically switching between an implicit method and an explicit method one two or more times during the finite element simulation.

15. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the implicit method.

16. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the explicit method.

17. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the implicit method.

18. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the explicit method.

19. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a number of iterations performed using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the number of iterations exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

20. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring the internal energy of the model during iterations using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the internal energy exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

21. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a length of time the explicit method has been running and automatically switching from the explicit method back to the implicit method if the length of time exceeds a predetermined threshold time period.

22. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for extending the termination time of

the finite element simulation thereby forcing the finite element simulation to end using the implicit method.

23. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the formation of a metal shape.

24. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of Claim 14 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the springback of a metal shape.

25. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:
one or more computers; and
one or more computer programs running on the computer(s), the computer programs for performing a finite element simulation, the computer programs comprising computer instructions for automatically switching between an implicit method and an explicit method one two or more times during the finite element simulation.

26. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the implicit method.

27. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the explicit method.

28. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the implicit method.

29. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the explicit method.

30. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a number of iterations performed using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the number of iterations exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

31. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring the internal energy of the model during iterations of the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the internal energy exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

32. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a length of time the explicit method has been running and automatically switching from the explicit method back to the implicit method if the length of time exceeds a predetermined threshold time period.

33. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for extending the termination time of the finite element simulation if a solution is found using the explicit method thereby forcing the finite element simulation to end using the implicit method.

34. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the formation of a metal shape.

35. (Original) The computer system of Claim 25 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the springback of a metal shape.

36. (Currently Amended) A data signal embodied in a carrier wave, the data signal including one or more computer programs for performing a finite element simulation, the computer programs comprising:

instructions for automatically switching between an implicit method and an explicit method one or more times during the finite element simulation, and

instructions for monitoring the internal energy of the model during iterations using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the internal energy exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

37. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the implicit method.

38. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for beginning the finite element simulation using the explicit method.

39. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the implicit method.

40. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for ending the finite element simulation if a solution to the finite element simulation is determined using the explicit method.

41. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a number of iterations performed using the implicit method and automatically switching from the implicit method to the explicit method if the number of iterations exceeds a predetermined threshold number.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for monitoring a length of time the explicit method has been running and automatically switching from the explicit method back to the implicit method if the length of time exceeds a predetermined threshold time period.

44. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for extending the termination time of the finite element simulation thereby forcing the finite element simulation to end using the implicit method.

45. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the formation of a metal shape.

46. (Original) The data signal embodied in a carrier wave of Claim 36 wherein the finite element simulation is used to simulate the springback of a metal shape.

47. (New) A method for performing a finite element simulation, the method comprising automatically switching between an implicit method and an explicit method if convergence of the solution in the implicit method is not achieved within a threshold amount of time or iterations.